



WILL^M COX, 1773.

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GENUINE LIFE

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WILLIAM COX,

Who is now under Sentence of Death,
in *Newgate*,

For Robbing Mr. JOHN KENDRICK of *Bank-
Notes* and *Cash* to the Amount of more than
Four Hundred Pounds;

CONTAINING

A Recital of the Particulars of a very great Number of the most *artful Felonies* ever committed in this Kingdom; faithfully penned from *Authentic Accounts*, received from the indubitable Authority of COX's intimate Acquaintance.

*Though deep the Scheme, and artful be the Thief,
The Life devoid of Honour shall be brief;
The Laws insulted, Retribution claim,
Assert their Right, and blast th' unworthy Name.*

THE FIFTH EDITION.

L O N D O N,

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Norfolk-street, Strand; and all the Booksellers. 1773.

[Price One Shilling.]

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THE
GENUINE LIFE
OF
WILLIAM COX.

IT is not a little astonishing, that laws, framed with the most consummate wisdom, enacted from principles of the soundest policy, and enforced with a sagacity and strictness that does honour to the clearest heads and the purest hearts, should fail of being attended with that effect which the Legislature had in view, and which the officers of justice spare not their endeavours to promote:—yet so it is, that such excellent laws, though executed in the most impartial manner, do frequently fail of answering those salutary purposes for which they were intended.

Great complaints have been frequently made against the penal laws of this kingdom; they have been repeatedly deemed *cruel*, and denominated

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minated *sanguinary*.—The Writer of this narrative was among the number of those, who, always inclining to the side of humanity, looked with horror on some of those laws, by which our common rights are guarded :—but, let the reader, who is still more merciful than prudent, attend at the Old Bailey only for a few successive sessions, or be a spectator of the Wednesday's proceedings before the Bench of Magistrates in Bow-street ;—let him see the same felons acquitted of one, two, or three charges,—in nearly every instance, and with an almost unfailing certainty, return to the commission of the crimes previously charged on them, and again brought before the same tribunals of justice ;—let him reflect, too, that the crime last committed is generally attended with circumstances of greater aggravation than the former ;—and then let him blame the severity, or applaud the justice, of our laws, as his humanity may dictate, or his sense of the duty of a good citizen shall command.

It is a reflection no less true than melancholy, that not in one case in a hundred can the humane feelings of a prosecutor, the mercy of a court of justice, or the tenderness of a jury, operate to the advantage of the culprit. The young offender, encouraged by his companions, and vitiated in principle by the force of evil example, generally proceeds from the commission of a smaller crime to the perpetration



tration of a greater, till the violated laws of his country doom him a victim to the injury they have sustained. In this case the greater number receive that mercy from the benevolent hands of the Sovereign which is equally to be applauded and regretted. Transportation, intended as a favour, usually terminates in a punishment. Of the great numbers thus ignominiously detached from their native country, many, by pursuing their pestiferous occupations, fall victims to the laws of those colonies to which they are sent; others end a wretched life through the change of the climate, the inclemency of the seas, or the peculiar disagreeableness of their situation as transports; and of the young and healthy, many remain slaves to the masters who purchase them;—and the rest, prematurely returning to England, expiate, with their blood, the aggravated offences of having deserved an ignominious death, and of having forfeited a right to that renovated life, which Providence, through the breast of the King, had afforded them!

The following narrative is dedicated, not so much to the accusation of an offending individual, as to the service of that public which has been essentially injured by his artifices; and happy will the Writer think himself, if any thing herein shall tend to guard the honest and the careless in the protection of their property; and to warn the young,

the thoughtless, and the extravagant, that it is only by a steady and uniform perseverance in the paths of virtue, that they can hope to escape the most shocking ignominy in this life, and the most consummate misery in a future.

WILLIAM COX, the unfortunate hero of the following pages, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Cox, of Holywell-Lane, Shoreditch, and had the peculiar misfortune of being trained in the ways of thieving almost from his infancy; a circumstance that will plead, if any thing can plead, in his behalf; since the youth who has never been enchanted with the charms of integrity, may scarcely know that dishonesty is a crime: it is, at least, a strong presumption in the favour of any one not endowed with more than usual good sense and sublimity of soul; and the abilities of young Cox are of that kind, which have rather tended to make him *crafty* than *wise*.

COX, the elder, who was transported several years ago, is a narrow-ribbon-weaver by trade, and is said to be yet living. The mother of our young culprit is alive, and bears the character of an honest woman; and, in fact, she is the only honest person of the family. The character of his uncle West, who was apprehended with him for this last offence, is sufficiently known; and Cox has a brother, now about twelve years of age, who is what
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the vulgar call *a knowing kiddy*; and another brother, not long since deceased, bore no better character.

The first robbery that ever young Cox committed was in company with his father, and it was perpetrated in the following manner: The father and son, who was then a very little boy, were walking through Grosvenor-street, when the old man, observing a silver tankard standing in a window, attempted to steal it; but the railing before the house preventing his reaching it, he hoisted the youth over the rails, who easily took the tankard out of the window, and gave it to his father, who lifted him back into the street. Thus was this child initiated in the mysteries of iniquity, at a time of life when he was hardly able to distinguish on the propriety, or impropriety of his own conduct.

It rarely happens that even the vicious and abandoned wish that their children should imitate their base example; nor is the human mind often so depraved, but that it is sincerely hoped that the son may, in the common phrase, prove *a better man than his father*.

This, however, was far from being the case in the present instance, and the ill-fated subject of this narrative was instructed in the lucrative advantages of roguery, at that period of life when his pliant mind might have been formed to virtue, and he might have been prepared

pared to have led a life honourable to himself, and advantageous to the community.

The Writer of this account, the authenticity of every line of which may be relied on, is far from wishing to save a notorious offender from expiating with his life the offences he has offered to the common rights of humanity, and the violated laws of his country ; but he cannot help thinking that there is something singularly unfortunate in the case of a youth trained to vice from his infancy, and whose numerous and extraordinary escapes from the hand of justice, have only served to harden a mind, which was never once impressed with a sense of impending danger, nor ever, even for a moment, illumined with a single ray of virtue.

For these reasons, and for these only, he would wish the merciful interposition of the Sovereign may yet spare this criminal from the most ignominious exit, to which he is otherwise fated, merely to see if the serious danger of his present melancholy situation may not enkindle a spark of virtue in his breast, and teach him that the path of honesty is the path of peace. The case is very singular, and it would certainly be worth while to make the experiment.

It will be impossible to trace this offender through all the devious paths in which he has trodden—perhaps he has committed more artful

ful felonies, than any one of his age who ever yet fell a sacrifice to the wholesome severity of our laws:—but in the following pages will be given a faithful recital of a great number of his offences, which have been authenticated by persons who have had melancholy occasion to be acquainted with young Cox, but, having since happily seen the error of their ways, have reformed their lives by a return to the paths of virtue; and the Writer of this narrative had even permission to have given the names of these parties, if they could have afforded any satisfaction, or extended any useful knowledge to the public.

Immediately after Cox's first adventure with his father, he commenced pickpocket, and soon became the most dexterous of his profession. In process of time he was so very expert in this business, that it has been a common custom in several public-houses which he frequented, in the neighbourhood of Clerkenwell, to lay wagers that he should pick the pocket of any person in company of his watch, without that person's knowledge, though the party was previously on his guard. In this case young Cox and the party used to walk backward and forward in the room, conversing on indifferent subjects, and Cox never failed to win the wager, by picking the pocket, notwithstanding all the precaution of the other.

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He would likewise often pick the pockets of his acquaintance in mere jest, only to shew his dexterity ; but he constantly returned the property so obtained.

About seven years ago, when he was confined in Clerkenwell Bridewell, on a charge of picking pockets, he was so miserably reduced in circumstances, that he was ragged and wretched beyond all description, and his whole body one perfect swarm of vermin ; but of late years he has dressed rather in a gay stile, and has been remarkably neat and decent in his appearance.

Young Cox has, for some considerable time past, lived with his uncle West, in Feathers-Court, High Holborn, to whose pernicious advice he is in a great measure indebted for the peculiar distress of his present situation ; for this uncle, instead of training his nephew in the path of industry and virtue, has done his utmost to seduce his mind, and to guide him in the high road to ruin.

It has been a common practice with Cox to watch when the door of any house has been open, and to slip in, and pocket any kind of plate, or other article of value that was light of conveyance ; and if he was found in the house, he had always an excuse ready, by which he escaped undetected. If we should relate the tenth part of his rogueries in this way, this
account

account would be swelled to the size of a volume.

About four years ago he went into a stationer's shop, in Water-lane, Fleet-street, and asked for the Beggar's Opera, which he said was for his sister. The gentlewoman of the house went up stairs to fetch the play, and in the mean time Cox pocketed a silver spoon. Soon after he was gone the spoon was missed, and, enquiry being made for it, one of the children said, "He saw the little master at play with "it." Cox had, at this time, the appearance of a child of ten years of age, though he was then fifteen.

Some time afterwards he slipped up stairs at the grocer's shop, the corner of Long-lane, Aldersgate-street, and secreted a silver-hilted sword. When he came down he was asked, what he had been doing, and having previously learnt the name of the child, he said, he had been playing with Master Billy; but the sword striking against the steps of the street door, he attempted to make his escape, but being apprehended he was tried for this offence, and had the good fortune to be acquitted.

While he was walking through Hanover-street, he observed a window of a house open, and being previously provided with a tame sparrow, he let it fly into the house, and the door being open, he went in as to seek for it. It

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happened that there was only an old lady in the house, whom hearing, he took refuge in the area, after having filled his pockets with spoons, salts, and other plate. Upon the lady's discovering him there, he burst into tears, and begged she would give him his sparrow, as his mother would beat him if he went home without it. The lady complied, and the young rascal decamped with his booty.

He once went to the Castle, a public-house, near Shoreditch church, under pretence of enquiring for a Mrs. Robinson, a laundress, who lodged there: he easily obtained admittance, and Mrs. Robinson not being at home, he secreted and carried off plate to the amount of fourteen pounds.

While some dust-men were loading a cart in Hanover-square, he got unperceived into the house, and stole some linen, a watch, and two silver candlesticks. For this offence he was afterwards apprehended, and carried before Sir John Fielding, who asking him what he had done with the effects, he answered, "If I had got them I should have made broth of them before now, and I dare say they are by this time boiled down."

At another time he got into the house of a corn-chandler in Fenchurch-street, and stole four bank notes of twenty pounds each, and all the money in the till.

Every

Every boyish trick that he could invent was used as an artifice to help forward the perpetration of his crimes. At one time he got playing at peg-top with a gentleman's son at the door of his father's house, at Stoke Newington; and while the youth was intent on his game, Cox went into the house, and stole a silver pint-mug, and six spoons.

On a Sunday, about two years ago, he watched a gentleman's family out of their house in Grosvenor-street, then got into the house, stole plate to the amount of fifty pounds, which he carried into Oxford-street, where he took a coach, and conveyed them to his lodgings.

As he had a very boyish appearance, he used frequently to make use of that circumstance to obtain his ends. It has been no uncommon practice with him to play at marbles with young gentlemen before the doors of the parents houses, and to watch the first opportunity of running in, and committing a robbery.

At a house in Bishopsgate-street, Cox, in company with a man who called himself Captain Davis, and who has been since capitally convicted, but reprieved and transported, robbed the house of a gentleman in Bishopsgate-street, of as much plate as one man could carry.

As Cox was passing through Petty-France, Westminster, a violent shower happened to fall, on which he stood up against the door of a genteel house, the owner whereof observing his genteel appearance, and pitying his situation, obligingly asked him in, and took him into a back parlour. Our Genius soon found that nothing could be done in this room, and therefore asked permission to look out of the window of the fore-parlour, that he might see his papa, whom he expected to pass through the street; and this request being complied with, he soon found means to secret a silver tea-strainer and other things, with which he very calmly walked off, after thanking the gentleman for his civility and politeness.

The above-mentioned Captain Davis and Cox committed many singular robberies in company together, of which the following are none of the least remarkable.

They went together to the house of an apothecary at Hoxton, and Davis appearing in the character of a gentleman, while Cox acted as his servant, the latter went in to ask for his master's bill; and, as the apothecary had served a gentleman of the name of Davis, Cox easily found means to stay in the house till he had secreted a silver pint mug.

About twenty months since, Cox and Davis agreed on a robbery near Bow, when Cox,
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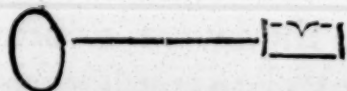
though not present at the perpetration of the crime, received his full share of the booty. This seems to prove the truth of the old observation, that there is *honour among thieves*.

Another robbery was committed by these confederates at Chelsea, when, by means of a false key, they stole a considerable quantity of linen, a watch, and two bank-notes for twenty pounds each.

At Upper Holloway, Cox observing a door to stand open, he slipped into the house, and stole silver spoons and linen to a considerable amount.

A woollen-draper's shop in Black-Friars was some time since robbed of seventy-six yards of broad cloath; and, though the thief was never brought to justice, Cox's companions well knew that he was the perpetrator of the robbery.

Cox, at one time, entered and robbed a chandler's shop on Saffron-hill, by means of a false key, which would open almost any door, having no wards, but only a kind of catcher, as will appear by the following sketch of it.



By means of a false key of this kind, our hero got into a house in King-street, Wapping, whence he conveyed off linen and plate to a considerable

considerable amount;—by the same means he likewise procured admittance in Gun-street, Spitalfields, and robbed the house of silver spoons, salts, and other plate.

Cox observing a servant-maid leave the door of her master's house at Hackney, he slipped in, and robbed it of plate to a large amount.

Captain Davis, as he called himself, attended Cox to the house of a gentleman in Bloomsbury-square, where, while the former was conversing with the gentleman, the latter rifled the house of a large quantity of plate.

Our adventurer one morning early got into the shop of an eminent linen-draper in Cheap-side, but the journeyman discovering him, he cried out *whoop*, pretending to be at the play of *hide and seek*; and, as he had so much the appearance of a child, he was suffered to escape, without his conduct being criticised.

It has been a frequent practice with him to procure admission into houses, by obtaining the names of the children of the family, learning where they were at boarding-school, and pretending to be their school-fellow. This bait commonly succeeded admirably well, as he rarely left the house without bringing off a valuable booty; and the people of the house
seldom

seldom suspected the young gentleman's tale, till it was too late to detect the thief.

He once got entrance to the lodging of a mantua-maker, at a coach-maker's in Tottenham-court-Road, and stole a quantity of new linen, and a silver spoon; but, being likely to be taken, he took shelter under the bed, and at length escaped with his booty.

The person who called himself Captain Davis once engaged to go with Cox on a filching-party to Windsor. They went on horseback, appeared as officers, and got up stairs at an inn, which they robbed of plate and money to a large amount.

About fifteen months since, Cox committed a robbery at the house of Mr. West, in Montague-street, Spitalfields; but, being in liquor, he stumbled in coming down stairs, and was apprehended, with a quantity of plate in his possession, and a handkerchief filled with false keys. He would have been tried for this offence, but the Grand Jury threw out the bill.

Cox, having stolen a gold watch at Islington, and being detected, he cried so heartily to go to school, that, in pity to his youth and seeming innocence, he was permitted to go about his business.

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It was a frequent custom with Cox and a companion to go out at midnight with a number of false keys, with which they used to try the locks in the doors of various houses:—when a lock was found which any of their keys would open, they used to remark the particular house, to which they would go on the following day, and if they could watch the family out, Cox would unlock the door of the house, deliver his keys to his companion, and then go in and strip the premises of such valuable articles as he could lay his hands on.

From the house of a foreign gentleman in Soho-Square, Captain Davis and Cox stole plate, fine linen, and silk gowns, to a very considerable amount.—As soon as this robbery was committed, Davis was stopped in the house; but he found means to make his escape.

At a house in Leicester-street Davis and Cox ordered a supper, and, while Davis was eating, Cox went up stairs, and stole two dozen of hats intended for exportation, and other articles of value.

Three weeks before Cox's last apprehension he stole a large quantity of linen; but a prosecution was prevented, and the whole affair adjusted, through the diligence and interest of a woman who keeps a public-house in Rag-street,

street, Clerkenwell, which was much frequented by Cox and his companions.

Cox and Captain Davis went to a pawn-broker's shop in the Back-Lane, Chelsea, where they fastened the owner into a back-room, and set about rifling the shop: the pawn-broker fired at them; notwithstanding which, they packed up four or five dozen of silk cardinals, and as many other things as filled two sacks, which they conveyed to a house in Piccadilly.

At one time Cox, and the famous Darts, the fighter, were making betts at the Black Raven in Fetter-lane, when Cox found means to sweep off all the cash, with which he made his escape.

At another time our hero and Captain Davis, having learned the residence of a Quaker, in Red-Lion Market, White-Cross-street, they watched the family when they went out to the Meeting on the Sunday following, got into the house, and robbed it of money and cloaths to a very large amount.

A girl who was kept by Cox used to make a frequent practice of pledging some trifle at the pawn-broker's: in a short time she would go to redeem her pledge, and our hero used to attend her. While the pawn-broker was gone up stairs for the effects, Cox used to take

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the opportunity of examining the shop, and seldom failed of carrying off goods to the amount of more than twenty times the value of the things which his lady came to redeem.

Cox, at one time, by means of a false key, obtained entrance into a house in Seacoal-lane, near Snow-hill, which he robbed of linen to a considerable amount, and conveyed it away undetected.

Our adventurer, in conjunction with the above-mentioned Captain Davis, went into the shop of an eminent silver-smith in St. Paul's Church-yard, and, under pretence of making a purchase of some sleeve-buttons, and other articles, they robbed the shop of plate to a considerable amount.

At Rotherhithe the confederates, Davis and Cox, took down the shutter of a house, and, having broke the window, got in, and stole silk gowns, cardinals, silver spoons, and other valuable articles, with which they escaped undiscovered.

Mr. Cox had an adventure at Paddington, which, at the same time that it proves with how much artifice he could act, proves also that his simplicity of conduct was the most exquisite part of that artifice.—He was playing, according to his frequent custom, with some children at the door of a gentleman's house;—
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the children were called to dinner :—our hero, equally brave and cautious, staid till the dinner was ended ; then renewed his play with the young gentlemen ; and, while the youths were again engaged in play, he slipped into the house, and stole a very large quantity of plate.

At Hommerton, near Hackney, about three years ago, while the door of a gentleman's house was open, the family walking in the garden, and the servant laying the cloth for dinner, Cox got through the parlour window into the dining-room, and stripped it of all the plate which was laid on the table for accommodating the family at dinner.

Two years ago last Easter, Cox, with some company, went to Epping Forest, to see what is called the Easter Hunt : instead of pursuing his game when the stag was first turned out, he pursued the *other game*, in search of which, more properly speaking, he was bound ; for, while a family was strictly engaged in viewing the sport from the windows, our Adventurer slipped into the house, and pocketed as much plate as he could conveniently carry off. This was done almost in an instant, and Cox immediately galloped after the sportsmen. It happened that the motion of the horse threw a silver salt out of his pocket, from which circumstance the particulars of this robbery came to be known, even to those who went from

London with him.—Our hero dismounted, took up the lost plate, was in the saddle again in an instant, and pursued his pleasure without any perturbation of mind, which would have harrassed one less practised, and less hardened in the ways of iniquity.

On the day of the exploit above recited, several of Cox's companions, who were down with him at the forest, having taken with them a bull-bitch, for the purpose of diverting themselves with the baiting of a bull, they entertained themselves at that savage business till the bitch had torn out the tongue of the animal; but even this was not sufficient to satisfy their insatiable thirst of cruelty; for they killed the bitch on the spot, because she had not more severely harrassed the unoffending bull.

Captain Davis and Cox, having entered the shop of a hosier and haberdasher, in Westminster, took the advantage of the master's back being turned, to rob the shop of silk stockings, and ribbons to a considerable value. This is the only instance of Cox's being concerned in shop-lifting that has come to our knowledge.

Some few years ago, a man and a woman, who had positively sworn against Cox before a justice of the peace, swore as positively in his favour at the Old Bailey for the consideration of three guineas: nor is this the only instance

stance in which Cox has found the money, which he had acquired by dishonest means, serviceable in the extricating him from those difficulties in which the illegal thirst of that money had involved him.

This Offender having been apprehended on a charge of having robbed Mr. Kendrick of bank-notes and cash to the amount of about four hundred and forty pounds, he was on Wednesday, the eleventh of August last, examined before the bench of justices in Bow-street, when it appeared that Mr. Kendrick (who is a capital dealer in horses, and serves the French king, and the principal nobility of France) had sustained the loss of about the above-mentioned sum; but it did not appear that his lodgings had been broke open, or that even the locks of his bureau had been forced. It came out in evidence, that, soon after Mr. Kendrick was robbed, Cox called on Claxton, and that they agreed to go together into the country—that they went as far as Reading, where they purchased a horse; giving in payment for it a bank-note for one hundred pounds, of which Mr. Kendrick had been robbed, and receiving, in part of the change, a bank note of fifty pounds value, which note Claxton afterwards exchanged at the bank for three smaller notes, two of which were afterwards found in the possession of Mr. West, the uncle. West, being at that time considered as an accessory, said in his defence, that he had those
notes

notes of his wife the day before her death, which happened nearly about the time that Mr. Kendrick lost his property.

On Wednesday, August the 18th, these persons were re-examined before the bench of magistrates, in Bow-street, when Mr. Kendrick again appeared against young Cox and his uncle. Mr. Knapp and Mr. White, of Reading, attended, and the stolen note was regularly traced from the hands of Claxton, who received it of Cox, to the bank, where it was changed for smaller notes, some of which were found on the person of West, Cox's uncle, who, on his being taken, said, he had possessed the notes three years, though they had been issued from the bank but a few days. Cox was committed to Clerkenwell Bridewell, for trial at the next Old Bailey sessions; and West was discharged, as the receiving notes the produce of other notes is no felony.

On Friday, the 10th August, 1773, William Cox was indicted at the Sessions of the peace held at Justice Hall, at the Old Bailey, when, after a full hearing of the above circumstances, he was found guilty.

Let us remark, that, as it appears, from the state of the evidence against him at Bow-street, he could be convicted only on *circumstances*, it is reasonable to suppose that his general character as a notorious thief, operated to his disadvan-

disadvantage: but a question will now naturally arise, whether any man, however infamous his former character, should lose his life in consequence of *circumstantial* evidence, though that evidence be as strong as in its nature it can be; and whether it is consistent with the equitable and mild administration of justice so much boasted of in England, that death should follow a sentence founded on such circumstantial evidence.

The Writer of this account has not the least doubt of Cox's having committed the robbery for which he is sentenced to suffer; but he pleads, for the honour of our laws, that they may be enforced in a way equally consistent with the *letter* and the *spirit* of them.

This Culprit was tried by Mr. Baron Eyre, who was Recorder of London at the time when Cox had been heretofore tried, and narrowly escaped; and who has repeatedly and pathetically advised him to reform his conduct, and not subject himself to equal disgrace and danger in future.

While Cox was in Clerkenwell Bridewell, he was so averse to the being made a public show of, that he would not admit any but his particular acquaintance to be introduced to him.

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Since Cox's conviction he has been visited in the Press-yard by great numbers of people, of whom the far greater part were women, and many of those of the fairest, and, *apparently*, the most amiable of the sex.—

“ What *mighty ills* have not been done by
WOMAN ! ”

It is to be lamented that only two hours in the day are allowed for prisoners under sentence of death to see their friends; viz. from noon till two o'clock in the afternoon; as it often happens that when there are several capital offenders under sentence, as is the case in the present instance, those who wish them well have scarcely an opportunity of affording them the advice and assistance the peculiar distress of their situation may demand.

We shall now proceed to a recital of some particulars, which will be thought interesting by the reader, because they tend to shew the turn of mind, and depict the general character, of this offender.

He has been at all times remarkably sober and abstemious from liquor; and if, at any time, his company have prevailed on him to drink more than it was his custom to do, the moment he found that the liquor began to operate to his disadvantage, he never failed to order a coach, and retire to his lodgings.

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He generally used to carry a considerable sum of money about him; and, when he called at any of the houses which he frequented, he would drink a small glass of any kind of liquor that was at hand, and constantly paid a shilling for it.

He used, when among thieves of the petty kind, to boast that he had a soul above descending to the meanness of filching the brass-knocker from the house, or the scraper from the street-door.

Of late years he kept a little black mare, on which he used to ride to all the races within a moderate distance of London, where he was generally a great and a successful gambler: but his favourite little mare has been sold since his apprehension for the offence for which he is now under sentence of death.

The common toast given by this offender was, "A health to all thieves."

It was his frequent boast, that he had entered and robbed a great number of houses while the families were at dinner; and he is supposed to have stolen, on the whole, to the amount of more than TEN THOUSAND POUNDS!

Our adventurer was always of opinion, that he should never commit any offence, the punishment

nishment of which would amount to any thing more than transportation; and his being convicted for the robbing of Mr. Kendrick was certainly a circumstance beyond the utmost stretch of his imagination to have conceived possible.

It is a distinguishing mark in the character of our hero, that, though he kept a good horse, he never committed a robbery on the highway, nor ever made any depredations on the houses in the neighbourhood of which he lived.

The Writer of this account having asked an acquaintance of Cox how it happened that he had committed so small a number of robberies out of London, was answered, that "it never was his custom to work much in the country."

Our hero, like other people in polite life, kept a monkey, of which he was not a little fond. This animal he used to keep tied in such a situation, that, when he descended for food, he could not recover his former station but with the best help of his claws. It was Cox's peculiar pride and pleasure to give this monkey apples and other fruit, till his paws were so loaded that he could not regain the place he had left, and then he enjoyed the highest satisfaction, from the distress to which the poor animal was reduced.

It

It was one of Cox's most singular pleasures, and which shews his warm attachment to the sex, to see his mistress elegantly dressed.— This favourite of our hero was no other than the renowned Sally Claxton, sufficiently famous for being sister to Claxton, the evidence against Cox in the matter for which he is now sentenced to die ; but more celebrated for being a notorious shoplifter, and the chosen partner of the most ingenious and admirable thief this day in his Majesty's dominions.

Claxton, the companion of, and evidence against Cox, is remarkable for having been a famous card-shuffler, and dexterous at fighting and jumping for wagers ;—and, when any money has been deposited, Mr. ——n has seldom failed to make off with the booty.

It now only remains to recommend this ill-fated youth to the mercy of that Sovereign, the laws of whose realms he has violated ;—at least we must pray for his acceptance at that throne of mercy, where the singular unhappiness of his birth and connections will be considered ; the errors of his youth, we trust, overlooked ; and the present penitence of his soul be deemed some sort of retribution for the various and aggravated crimes of which he does not deny himself to have been guilty.

If he should be doomed, as it is but too probable he will, to expiate his offences with
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his life, let his fate be a warning to the young, the heedless, and the extravagant, not to engage in scenes of dissipation; which their fortunes have by no means enabled them to support the expence of, nor their abilities qualified them to sustain, with any degree even of that reputation which the vicious themselves would wish to obtain.

Let us add a wish, that those who think themselves in the most secure situation, may, from the example of this offender, learn that *Wisdom's ways are pleasantness*, and that *all her paths are peace*.

A P P E N D I X.

THE purchasers of the four former editions of this pamphlet will excuse these additions, as the particulars are but just come to hand, and we think it our duty to give to the public all we can learn respecting so remarkable an offender.

To shew what abandoned kind of company visit the poor wretches under sentence of death, we will only relate an occurrence which happened while the Writer of this narrative was present.—A fellow accosted Cox, at the gate of the Press-Yard, with a “Never mind it, “Billy—you’ll come through this bout——“you’ll *’scape the Night-cap*.”——“Yes——“ (replied Cox) I shall come through—at the *“Gallows.”*

Since

Since his conviction (and we are sorry to say it) his behaviour has been such as to contradict some part of what is written in the preceding pages. He is daily visited by a number of those unhappy women, to whose seducing artifices but too many youths have fallen a sacrifice.

It is remarkable, that, among these women, there is only one who would not be deemed a beauty in a whole circle of beauties. It is pity that those graces which Heaven has bestowed, for purposes the most wise and benevolent, should be prostituted to promote the cause of every species of vice and immorality.

In the presence of the Writer of this narrative, a person asked where Francis Talbot (another unhappy convict) was—Cox replied, that he was at prayers.—The Turnkey of Newgate then, with a concern, and an emphasis of expression, that does him great honour, stepped forward, and said to Cox, *And do You never pray too?*—“No,” replied our hero, “never till after dinner.”

At this juncture a woman advanced to the gate, and said, “Bill Cox, what can you eat for dinner?—Could you eat a quarter of a goose?”—“Can I not?” replied Cox:—“Then I have ordered it,” said the woman; on which Cox immediately ordered a bottle of red Port.

A gentleman whose particular turn of mind frequently carries him to the Press-Yard, and who has some small connections in the literary

literary world, being observed by Cox, he abused and cursed him, as the supposed author of his life, which in truth he was not, nor had any concern in it.

It is painful, in some cases, to relate the truth; but the public have a right to genuine information in a matter of this kind; and it is for this reason we declare that the behaviour of this offender, for some days past, has been indecent and improper in a high degree; yet we once more recommend him to the mercy of the Sovereign, for the Credit of the Laws of England, on the fullest conviction that no man ought to suffer on *Circumstantial Evidence ONLY*.

SINCE our hero has been under sentence of death, a gentleman carried him a paper, which he requested him to sign, if it was true; as it would most probably be a means of saving his life. Cox read it over twice, with great attention, and then solemnly denied its being true; thus disdaining, as it then appeared, to save his life by telling a lie:—yet has he, since that time, *almost* acknowledged, to the clergyman who attends him, the truth of the contents of the above-mentioned paper.

Our hero is deemed the *real* Macheath of the present age. He sings all the songs in the Beggar's Opera with a degree of taste that the Macheaths of the Theatre might envy; nor is he less a favourite with the ladies than the hero of Gay's celebrated Opera.—Cox himself says, that if he was but a little taller and handsomer he should make the finest Macheath that ever trod the stage. In fact, his voice is melodious beyond description.

The Ordinary of Newgate, being asked respecting the delay of the report being made to his Majesty, of the prisoners now under sentence of death, has declared, that they are always better prepared to launch into eternity at the expiration of about ten days after sentence of death is passed, than at any future period.—We mean not the least reflection on the present Recorder of London; we will not suppose him remiss in the discharge of his duty; but we wish him to recollect this circumstance.



